

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2009

IGCSE

IGCSE Spanish (4440) Paper 02 - Reading and
Writing

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General Comments

The level of difficulty of the paper is comparable to previous series and candidates were generally well prepared for the examination. The vast majority of candidates at this November entry were native speakers. Some non-native speakers entered the examination and generally scored at the lower end of the mark range.

Candidates scored full marks on the lower end of the incline of difficulty, especially in the reading parts of the paper.

Rubrics and attention to conventions were followed appropriately. Candidates were able to complete the paper in the time allocated and did not omit sections or leave questions unfinished.

Section A Part One

Question 1

Candidates generally scored full marks on this section. There was no evident pattern of error in the very few mistakes which did arise.

Question 2

The majority of candidates performed well on this question once again, with no pattern arising from the errors which did occur.

Question 3

Native speaker candidates scored very well on this question, as did some second language entries. 'Peligro' was not recognised on some occasions.

Section A Part Two

Question 4

Native speaker and higher ability candidates tended to write more words than the amount suggested, but as the quality of language was so high this did not adversely affect their marks. Candidates who were not native speakers answered adequately at this level with shorter passages and more mistakes in basic constructions. Some much less able candidates were already beginning to struggle at this level.

Section B Part One

Question 5

Candidates demonstrated a full range of comprehension of this question. Many scored full marks and were able to demonstrate the higher skills of deduction required in this type and level of question. Others encountered difficulty with an overall understanding of the general idea of each speaker's message.

Section B Part Two

Question 6

Many candidates performed well on this question, demonstrating a good command of language and idiomatic expression. As in previous years, some candidates failed to score highly on the use of language mark allocation as they made little or no attempt to express their answers in their own words and lifted blocks of the original text which include the correct answer but gave no indication of in-depth understanding. This was less evident than in some sessions however and suggest that centres are guiding their candidates to demonstrate how they can manipulate language as well as identify content.

Section C

Question 7

Candidates scored across the full range of marks in the essay writing part of the paper and some produced fluent, imaginative and interesting work which met the criteria and made good use of appropriate idioms. Some candidates wrote more than was suggested for the total number of words but this was not generally detrimental to their marks due to their overall competency as native speakers or competent linguists at this level. Less able candidates made frequent and basic errors and the least able mixed English with their very limited Spanish which rendered the overall version incomprehensible in places. However, candidates had generally been well prepared for this section of the paper.

All three options attracted writers and there were few occasions when candidates did not comply with the content of the question.

Statistics

IGCSE Spanish

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Lowest mark for award of subject grade (Paper 01 and 02 only)	85	76	67	59	49	39	30	21
Lowest mark for award of grade for Paper 03, Speaking (optional)	51	45	39	33	28	19	13	7

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